

Religious Intelligence.

SANDWICH ISLANDS.

Letter from Mr. Coan, dated at Hilo, Hawaii, Jan. 31st, 1839. Continued Progress of the Revival and Great Additions to the Church.

The following letter contains the latest intelligence received from the station to which it relates, though not so late as what has been received from some of the other islands. The tidings relating to what the Spirit of God appears to be doing at the Sandwich Islands, is similar to what the promises of the Bible encourage the church to expect to hear from all parts of the heathen world, at no distant day. *Zion's Herald.*

In letters dated March 19th, and Sept. 26th, 1838, I gave some account of the good hand of our God upon us, and of his great mercy to this people. Since the date of my last work has been steadily advancing. Thus far the converts have, for the most part, stood fast and appeared well. Some have fallen, but less, perhaps, than might have been expected among so many thousands, especially when we remember the ignorant, besotted, and loathsome condition in which they have lived from infancy, and from which they have but just now been rescued. They are all babes, and they need the most anxious watching, and the most tender and patient nursing. As their pastor, I feel loaded with a weighty responsibility. The multifarious and innumerable cases which call for counsel, reproof, correction, encouragement, rebuke, instructions, etc., fill up many laborious and anxious hours by day and by night, and call for all that wisdom, that meekness, that patience, that fidelity and love, which a poor worm may draw from the Living Fountain above.

How many of these converts, as we now hope they are, will reach heaven, God only knows. That a great multitude will, I firmly believe. But how shall they be sanctified? Through the truth surely, if sanctified at all. But how shall the truth be kept in such constant and quickening contact with their minds as to dispel their darkness and consume their lusts? They are scattered over a parish of a hundred miles in length, and of difficult access. How shall one weak pastor feed them with knowledge and understanding? How shall one frail shepherd lead them all? How cherish the feeble, bind up the broken, reclaim the wandering, restore the lost, and beat back the hosts of prey that roar on every side?—Much of my time is necessarily spent in making tours through Hilo and Puna, and this will probably be more and more the case as the church enlarges. On these tours I usually spend from two to five weeks, visiting all the church members in their respective villages, calling all their names, holding personal interviews with them, inquiring into their state, their hearts, prayers, manner of living, etc., counselling, reproving, and encouraging, as the case may require, and often "breaking bread" from place to place.

The battle with the prince of the power of the air has been very warm and hard contested. Satan has disputed every inch of ground, and "the Spirit that works in the children of disobedience" still rallies his scattered and broken forces, and returns to the charge with all the madness of desperation. But Jesus rides gloriously, conquering and to conquer.—The kingdom is his and he must reign till he have put all enemies under his feet. Some of the wicked are desperate in their rebellion, even denying the Lord that bought them, and madly rushing upon the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler. Some have turned bitter persecutors of the saints. "In the land of uprightness they still deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord." "But he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision."—The spirit of bitter and open hostility is, however, confined to a few, so far as this district is concerned. The great mass of the people wish to be thought on the side of God, but many are still in their sins.—The number on the road to death is, however, constantly decreasing, and the company of the saints multiplying. Believers are daily added to the Lord.

In my letter of September 26th, I remarked that about 3,400 souls had been added to this church from the first of Jan., 1838, up to the date of that letter; and that the church then numbered (Sept. 26) 3,500. During the month of October I baptized and received 450; during Nov. 786; and in Dec. 357; making in all a fraction less than 5,000 souls added to this church during the year 1838. Since the commencement of the present month I have received sixty-three. The whole church now numbers something more than 5,100 souls, and 500 more now stand propounded for admission to its privileges. Praise the Great Shepherd to bring them all to his heavenly kingdom, and to him shall be glory and dominion forever.

Through the great mercy of God we are all in comfortable health at this station. Probably I have preached more during the past year, than during all the former years of my ministry. My least weekly number of sermons is six or seven, and the greatest twenty-five or thirty; often travelling in drenching rains, crossing rapid and dangerous streams, climbing slippery and beetling precipices, preaching in the open air, and sometimes in wind and rain with every garment saturated with water. Preaching, however, is one of the smallest, as well as one of the most pleasant items of duty which come upon me as a pastor and watchman to these thousands of souls. Though my labors were never before so arduous and overwhelming, yet I have rarely enjoyed more health of body and elasticity of mind than during the past year.

You have doubtless received much intelligence from these islands during the past year, and it has been such intelligence as you have not heard before from heathen lands since the commencement of modern missions. The year 1838 has been the year of the right hand of the Most High to this people. It has been the year of jubilee. Surely the prayers of Zion have been answered, and God has appeared in his glory to build up Zion. Your heart and the hearts of your associates will rejoice, and while you stand upon the watch-tower beyond the flood, and call out to us in these wide realms of darkness, "Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?" we will respond in notes of joy, "The morning cometh." It is "spread upon the mountains." "The shadows flee away." "The Lord doth build up Jerusalem. He gathereth together the outcasts. His mercy endureth forever." So will we "praise the name of the Lord from the west," and you in the east will unite in the anthem, and thus the "watchmen shall lift up the voice, and with the voice sing together."—*Missionary Herald for December.*

Rev. Joseph Wolff, the Missionary.

This eccentric convert from Judaism, after wandering for twenty years in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, proclaiming everywhere the gospel of Jesus Christ, has at length, it seems, settled down the pastor of a small parish in Yorkshire, Eng. A correspondent in London sends us the following notice of him:

London, Oct. 15, 1839.
Upon the bleak moors of Yorkshire, about four miles from Huddonfield, and surrounded by the rugged scenery of Linthwaite, lives that singular and eccentric character, Dr. Wolff. You have no doubt read some account of his journeys in Palestine and India in search of the ten lost tribes of Israel. A small church of recent construction, standing upon the summit of the hills, and visible from the road, is the most conspicuous object in this neighborhood. A few rude stone-built cottages with their stone roofs are scattered here and there upon the declivities of the naked, cold and barren hills. Thorns and briars can scarcely find a footing, and one feels that the curse upon Adam's first transgression is carried out to the very letter.

About £30 a year is all the Doctor receives for his official duties in this humble sphere of action. But an active man may always be useful, and I believe it is generally true that those who are of most service to others are least provident for themselves. I was much delighted to learn that the Doctor had recently opened a free school for the instruction of the neighboring clergy in the Hebrew language. They meet once a week at the Doctor's house, and the present class is composed of six. I met one of his pupils at my old friend Mr. Stable's, Crossland Hall, near Huddersfield, from whom I received this information. In addition to his Hebrew school his parochial duties are singularly useful, and he has been the instrument of correcting one most extraordinary local error which was common amongst his parishioners. You remember that most solemn and impressive sermon of our Savior upon the mount—*Blessed are the peace-makers, &c.*

In Yorkshire the small weavers and manufacturers who make a single piece of cloth and take it to market, (and before machinery had superseded manual labor this was the general course of the wollen trade), are called piece-makers. These hard working but simple-minded people took the blessing of our Savior all to themselves, and had no idea that reference was made to any other peace-makers than the makers of a piece of cloth. Dr. Wolff has rendered service by correcting this popular error in his own parish, and no doubt the correction will extend to other.

New Missionary Field.

Why does not either the American Board or the Home Missionary Society establish missions, or send missionaries, to the two and a half millions of slaves in this Christian nation? The Southern Church calls them heathen, and we showed in our last that Southern Christianity was inadequate to their salvation. There they are perishing for the gospel, and no man cares for their souls. Is it said that the law of the slaveholding States is in the way? So they are in China—so they are in most countries where we have missions. The command of the Head of the Church is, "Preach the gospel to every creature." No matter what laws—what human arrangements interpose, the gospel must be preached. We have missionaries among the Indians, why not among the slaves? It is said, "the gospel is within their reach—nominally at least." So it is in Armenia and Greece—so it is in many other countries to which we send the gospel in its purity. God commands his gospel—"the preaching that he bids," to be preached to those slaves. The word must be received "at his mouth," and not the slaveholder's. The Bible Society proclaimed to the world that they had supplied every family in the nation with the Word of God, when millions never saw it. We have agreed, tacitly, with the slaveholder to pass by the poor slave and leave him to perish. Is it said, this will bring us into collision with the South? This is what we want. God has a controversy with them, shall his people have none? We wish to see Christian missionaries go there in the spirit of the apostles, and preach the gospel to the slaves; and if they are put to death let there be the same spirit manifested as when Munson and Lyman fell by foreign violence. It is the duty of our missionary societies to take the lead in this.

Let the churches of the North go with the high commission of their Lord, and do their duty. Here is moral ground.—Try this, if political action is wrong, try this. We hope this point will be pressed to an issue.—*Advocate of Freedom.*

We learn, by a recent letter from Baltimore, that one man at least is acting in accordance with the above sentiments.—A clergyman of the Baptist persuasion has been for some weeks preaching in that city, drawing around him immense audiences, of all colors and classes, bond and free. He is bold, eloquent, and impressive—rebuking a popular-seek and time-serving clergy—and denouncing those who make merchandise of their fellow-beings as "men-stealers." In one of his sermons, he took up the subject of prejudice, and "respect of persons," and gave many anecdotes, demonstrating the vicinity of prejudice against color. He allows of no distinction in this respect in his congregations, declaring that the God whom he serves is no respecter of persons, and that no distinction of color exists in Heaven. We understand an extensive and almost unprecedented revival of religious feeling has resulted from his labor. *Penn. Freeman.*

VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

BRANDON, WEDNESDAY, DEC. 17, 1839.

The Law of God, and the Law of Man.

Were the subjects of two discourses, delivered by William Mitchell, Congregational minister of Rutland, in the Congregational meeting-house in this village, last Lord's day. There had been some flourish of trumpets about the matter. It was reported that friend Mitchell was coming to Brandon to preach against Non-Resistance. Having some curiosity to know what he could say in opposition to 'this sect that is everywhere spoken against,' I attended, listened with diligence, and took some brief notes.

By the way, when I was informed of what was going on, a spontaneous, involuntary thought that forced itself at once upon my own mind was this: Surely there must be some 'cause why' William Mitchell is called to Brandon on such an errand at the present time. The same thought still lingers.

But to the sermons.

The morning service was commenced by reading the 20th chapter of Exodus, which contains the Ten Commandments.

In his morning prayer he greatly exalted the Law of God, and gave much prominence to the idea that this law, obeyed, would be quite sufficient to bind together, in love and harmony, angels and men,—all intelligent beings.

As his forenoon's sermon contained comparatively little that was objectionable, and as it was nothing extraordinary—or doing great honor to so exalted a subject—I shall only give my naked notes, taken at the time, without amplification—throwing in, perhaps, a few words of comment of my own, in brackets.

Text: "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Romans vii. 12.

Introduction. Every precept contained in the Bible is the law of God, and implies a penalty.

[No doubt God has penalties for the transgression of every and any part of his law. 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.']

Two classes of laws in the Bible—moral and ceremonial.

From the latter we are freed—it being done away in Christ.

Christ hath also redeemed from the curse of the former—many as turn to God through him.

[If the speaker and myself were in discussion, it might be of some consequence between us to define precisely as to what the ceremonial law embraced.]

Subject of Discourse:—Consider the moral law, embraced in the Ten Commandments. Summed up by our Savior in this: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself. This is emphatically and in substance the Law of God.

Salvation through Christian 'expedient' of God, to rescue men from perdition—repeated, an 'expedient.'

[This, thought I, was labor to exalt the modern doctrine of 'expediency' with a vengeance.]

Division of the Subject:—Perfection—Extent—Immutability—and Eternity of God's Law.

I. Its Perfection.—Holy, just, and good. Making no allowance for sin.—Remains untouched by the redemption of Christ—i. e. the law remains the same in all its attributes.

If we examine the requirements of this law we shall find them all originating in love—perfect love.

The second part of this law—love thy neighbor as thyself—forbids all injustice, cruelty, and wrong towards our neighbor. How disastrous would be the abrogation

of this perfect law for the conduct of men towards their fellow men! There would only be left the law of man, which would be only the rush before the mighty torrent!

[Important concession this, in favor of truth, as connected with the counter part of this great subject. Human law but a slender rush, before the torrent of human depravity! Well would it be for human interests, if more importance were attached to the law of God, which reaches the heart, and less to the law of man, which—granting all it claims—extends, at most, only to the outward conduct;—and undertakes to regulate this, not by the perfect standard of God's law, but by public opinion—i. e. by the views, the feelings, the passions, the prejudices, the lusts of depraved men.]

This law of God obeyed—sin would cease, and earth become the abode of peace and love. It requires perfect refraining from all sin.

II. The Extent of the Law of God.—Exceeding broad—in a double sense.—Extends to every rational being in God's universe; and reaches the heart.

Banish sin from the universe, and this law of God would be all that would be needed.

[I ask if this perfect law has adaptation only to the wants of a sinless universe?—I ask if a perfect law is not good enough for the followers of Christ—for 'the just,' who are to 'live by faith'—under all circumstances? If they cannot lean with safety upon a support of such everlasting strength, what safety may they expect to find from trusting themselves upon a miserable 'rush?']

He would illustrate the difference between the law of God and the law of man.—[His illustration was none the worse for being a borrowed one—nor were his ideas in general less valuable on the same account.] During the reign of mob-law in a certain city, a law was made by the citizens, requiring every officer of justice to be at his post at night with his lantern in hand. Accordingly every officer appeared, as the law required, and yet walked the streets in darkness. It was then enacted that every lantern should have a candle in it. This was complied with—and still all was darkness. It was finally enacted that every candle should be lighted.

Such is the short-sightedness and inefficiency of human legislation. While the law of God strikes at the root—the source of sin.

[Here is another important concession, to be borne in mind when we arrive at other points.]

III. Immutability of God's Law.—Not diminished in its requirements by the Gospel, which is a remedy for sin—not an apology for it. Neither the depravity of man, nor salvation by grace, invalidates the claims of this unchangeable law.

IV. Eternity of God's Law.—The subjects of it will eternally be under obligation to render it perfect obedience.

AFTERNOON.

Subject:—The government of Man.

[Remarks continued in brackets.]

Text: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

Introduction.—Mercies of God innumerable—seed-time—harvest—health—civilization—social intercourse.

[Should have liked, well enough, to know what he meant by civilization, in this connection. But let it pass.]

A large proportion of human governments have been monstrously corrupt.

[Another important admission, to be remembered.]

Division of the subject.

I. The gratitude we owe to God for human government.

II. The gratitude we owe to God for such a government as we live under.

I. Gratitude for human government.

Almost any government better than none—even that of Nero, Domitian, and Caligula [!]

[That is: Creatures made in the image of God—but a little lower than the angels—and thus crowned with glory and honor—are so morally incapable of subjection to the holy law of God—the law of perfect love—that it is an inestimable blessing for them to fall into the hands of these wholesale murderers, who seemed to live only to torment and destroy their species! The setter-forth of such doctrines is the man who thinks that the radical advocates of Peace know not what they say or what they do!]

God would have anarchy nowhere.—The bees have their queens, and the beasts of the field have their governments.

[Because irrational brutes govern each other by violence, therefore rational men

cannot be governed without violence!—Those who are capable of being blinded by such reasoning as this are greatly to be pitied.]

There are those who would abolish all human governments. The Boston Peace Convention of 1838 published this doctrine.

[This charge is utterly false. It has not a shadow of foundation in truth. It is, doubtless, attributable, however, in the present case, more to a failure of the head than to a fault of the heart. The man who reasons so lamely and absurdly, as just now seen, must not be expected always to apprehend correctly in matters of fact. And these remarks are peculiarly applicable to those who trust to others to reason and gather facts for them.]

The truth of the case is this:—This sect, everywhere spoken against, hold that the followers of Christ, the Prince of Peace, ought to have nothing to do with the law of violence—but be governed by the perfect law of love, so magnified by friend Mitchell, in the morning. This is entirely a different thing from making a 'violent onset'—as the speaker elsewhere had it—against all human governments. The misapprehension, or misrepresentation, here pointed out, has been a prolific source of the obloquy and abuse everywhere heaped upon the advocates of radical peace principles.]

Primitive Christians absolved themselves from the governments around them. But the civil powers were then corrupt. Slavery was upheld by law. Idolatry was the religion of the land, established by law. How was Christianity to succeed against such opposition? by a silent influence, like the running of the stream that undermines the wall—not by a violent onset against government.

[If by a 'violent onset' he means physical violence, it certainly is not applicable to those who have nothing to do with such violence. If he means it, by implication, to be a reiteration of his previous charge, that 'this sect' undertake to overthrow and abolish all human government, it is the same untruth it was before. But if he means what is involved by the doctrine I have stated they hold to, then he has no right to use the language he employs.—So that in any and every aspect of it, the language he uses is altogether unwarrantable.]

Again:—What does he mean by the 'silent influence' of Christianity? and by its not making 'violent onset'? Does he mean that Christianity is never to be aggressive? that it is to hide itself, and have no open encounter with sin? And what becomes of his morning prayer—introduction to his sermon on the Law of God—in which he besought the Lord that the church might be the 'light of the world'—and 'be saved from luke-warmness'?—But especially what does he do with the precepts and examples of the Savior and his apostles, which require Christians to be bold for truth—valiant for God—'warring a good warfare'?

And again:—If the 'corruption' of the governments with which the primitive Christians found themselves in contact—their holding slavery established by law, &c., were a sufficient justification for their absoving allegiance to them, what is the reason the same 'corruption' may not be equal justification for Christians doing the same thing now? If there be anything of corruption lacking in the outward form of modern governments, it is made up in hypocrisy and intrigue. What, I ask, in the history of human governments, exhibits corruption equalling that of the government which, professing to be the most republican and Christian on earth, at the same time holds and treats as goods and chattels, in the hands of lustful tyrants, every sixth person of its own population? I challenge the production of a parallel!

But I have not done with my friend on this point. He taught, in other parts of his sermon, that 'human governments, however corrupt, are ordained of God,' and must therefore be received as blessings and obeyed. What right, then, had primitive Christians to absolve themselves from allegiance to these corrupt ordinances of God?]

Civil government, however corrupt, is an institution of God. 'Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.' 'Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.'

[No matter then how corrupt the government—from the corrupt, hypocritical republic that establishes by law and holds

in existence a most abhorrent and diabolical system of robbery, and lust, and murder, down through all the grades of aristocracy and monarchy, originating in, or originating—as a large proportion of them do—popery, Mahomedanism, and idolatry, in all their degrading, dehumanizing, man-destroying, God-dishonoring forms—all, all these corrupt and corrupting institutions are the workmanship of an all-wise, and holy, and just God!!! The consummate absurdity—not to say the involved shocking impiety and blasphemy—of deliberately and intelligently holding to such sentiments, lies out on the face of the declaration. To expose them, it needs no argument or comment. I would not be understood as denouncing outright, friend Mitchell, as a blasphemer. I am altogether willing to attribute the monstrous heresy to 'blindness of mind'—the habit of taking upon trust long received opinions—rather than to perverseness of heart.]

But, notwithstanding there is sufficient absurdity lying on the face of the matter, there is still another, not so plain at the first view, which it may not be amiss to expose. Look at two of these corrupt institutions which God has blessed the world with, making war upon each other, and working mutual and self-destruction. To have the absurdity and monstrosity complete, let the warring powers be professedly Christian—not only 'ordained of God' into institutions of violence, and blood, and murder, but expected to be looking to him for instant guidance and aid, in their bloody and murderous work. Suppose the hostile armies to be composed entirely of professing Christians. Now will Christians lay their hands to any work upon which they will not ask the blessing of God? Certainly not. What then are these warring Christians to be expected to pray for? Why, for the Lord to help them in the enterprises in which they are about to engage, certainly. The time of battle has come.—Now behold them all kneeling down, and listen to them while they all pray to the same God for success in battle—i. e. for the God of love and mercy to aid them in murdering each other!!!!

I ask, is there anything unfair or illegitimate in what I have here exhibited? Is it not fairly and legitimately drawn from the doctrines advanced? If not, let it be shown, and I will confess my obliquity of mental vision.

Once more:—Proceeding upon the literal construction which the speaker must put upon the passages cited, in order to sustain his doctrine by them, he sinks, in another view of the subject, still deeper in the quagmire, into which he has already dropped full twice his length. The doctrine is, that all governments are the ordinances of God, and they that resist these ordinances shall receive to themselves damnation. What then is to become of those who resist and overthrow any of these governments. Take a few familiar facts, as connected with this doctrine, and put them together. God establishes the government of Great Britain, and ordains that whosoever resists her power shall receive damnation. In process of time, 13 of her colonies rise in rebellion, resist her power, and consequently are damned and yet at the same time, and by the same God are ordained into another government!

If any one of the enormous absurdities exhibited under this head, can be said to have the pre-eminence over the others, this is probably entitled to crown the climax.]

[Notwithstanding the construction which the speaker has already been seen to put upon the passage—"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake"—arguing from it the divine ordination of all human governments, however corrupt, still he justified Daniel and the primitive Christians in refusing to obey such mandates of man as involve a violation of the law of God. I ask him, then, how Christians are to conduct towards those governments which in their very constitutions, and in all their parts, involve an utter violation of God's law? Take the scores and hundreds of governments in the heathen world, established and administered expressly for the promotion of idolatry. Are Christians to hold themselves in allegiance to these governments? All that the obnoxious radical peace men claim for themselves is, what friend Mitchell allows to Daniel and the primitive Christians—the right to 'obey God rather than men.']

Human governments necessary to prevent bloodshed.

[Rather have they not shed more blood—a thousand times told—than has been